



**NAVAJO NATION
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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CONTACT: Rick Abasta
Public Information Officer
Phone: 928-871-6560
Fax: 928-871-7090
Email: rabasta@nndcd.org

Community Development Block Grant closes out FY '03 and '04

WINDOW ROCK-Closing out a grant is a tedious process.

Nobody knows this fact more than James Adakai, senior programs and projects specialist for the Navajo Nation Community Development Block Grant. Adakai recently closed out two block grants and sent reports to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

His workspace tells the tale of a man on a mission.

Adakai's horseshoe-shaped desk is clean, except for a computer, phone and two monstrous stacks of paperwork. A bookshelf in the corner is packed with 19 years of three-ring binders from CDBG grants dating back to 1992.

Arbin Mitchell, director of Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, said the goal of the division is to help Navajo communities become self-governing and to improve their standard of living for infrastructure growth.

"We are here to help the Navajo people," Mitchell said. "CDBG does a lot of work to that end."

Established in 1974, HUD's Indian Community Development Block Grant was created to help Indian tribes and Alaska Natives to meet their community development needs.

ICDBG is a competitive program and governed by strict federal guidelines where projects are rated on a 100-point scale to determine funding allocations. The Navajo Nation competes with 171 tribes in the southwest region.

Management of the ICDBG begins with the signing of the grant agreement and ends after the project has been completed and final project reports submitted and accepted. The management of existing grants is evaluated as part of the review process for future grant applications.

Eligible activities for block grants include public facilities and improvements, housing rehabilitation, and economic development.

"We were successful in the close out of FY 2003 and 2004, after using project savings to finance an additional four projects," Adakai said. "They were very small projects, under \$100,000 each, which really helped communities assist more families with needed infrastructure."



James Adakai, programs and projects specialist for Community Development Block Grant, said the FY 2003 and 2004 grants have been closed out. Adakai said the FY 2011 grant process is currently underway and CDBG is accepting applications through the June 15, 2011 deadline. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

Adakai filed a narrative report, close out agreement and final financial status report with the HUD Southwest Office of Native American Programs on April 28, 2011, for FY 2003 grant B-03-SR-04-0281.

The grant amount totaled \$4,345,947. Pursuant to the close out process, a check in the amount of \$11,463.51 was also submitted to HUD as a reimbursement for unused funds.

Program administration cost for the grant totaled \$580,138 and project cost amounted to \$3,765,809. The grant was originally for eight projects but was stretched to 11 with grant amendments added from cost savings.

Two waterline/wastewater disposal projects were funded, totaling \$2,584,798. CDBG worked with Indian Health Services to provide water services, indoor plumbing, septic tank and drainage field systems to 52 homes in the communities of Kayenta and Tolani Lake.

The grant also funded eight power line extension projects with Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative in the amount of

\$2,325,059 for 166 clients and an electrical line mileage of 90.1 miles.

The communities served were Coyote Canyon, Dilcon, Mexican Water, Sanostee, Sweetwater, Whitecone, Wide Ruins, and Tsailé/Wheatfields. Two power line projects were also completed as

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an amendment to the grant and served 24 households with 5.23 miles of electrical extension in the communities of Indian Wells and Torreon.

On June 4, 2010, HUD approved to have two projects added, which were originally approved in the 1998 ICDBG grant to recoup outlay shortage incurred in the amount of \$512,459 due to expiration of grant appropriation.

The amount approved was \$393,585.32 for the communities of Whitecone and Indian Wells.

“We continually coordinate efforts with cooperating entities and partners to help these families as much as possible,” Adakai said.

Tribal bureaucracy is a hurdle that comes up continually, he said.

“It’s challenging sometimes. I guess that’s how it is being the largest tribe,” Adakai said. “We just have to continue doing our work here for the people out there, that’s the main focus.”

On May 6, 2011, Adakai filed a close out report complete with narrative report, close out agreement and final financial status report for FY 2004 grant B-04-SR-04-0877 with SWONAP.

The grant totaled \$5,491,00. Program administration cost totaled \$757,875 and project cost amounted to \$4,733,125.

The Ramah water/wastewater disposal project funded with the grant funds totaled \$1,484,500. CDBG worked with IHS to provide water services, indoor plumbing, septic tank and drainage field systems for 126 homes.

The grant also funded seven power line extension projects in cooperation with NTUA in the amount of \$3,248,625. A total of 70.15 miles of electrical line serviced 158 clients in the communities of Teec Nos Pos, Wheatfields, Lukachukai, Coppermine, Bodaway/Gap, Rock Point and Oljato.

On June 4, 2010, HUD approved two projects to be added that were originally approved in the 1998 ICDBG grant to have the

Navajo Nation recoup outlay shortage incurred in the amount of \$512,459 due to expiration of grant appropriation.

The amount was \$118,873.68 for the grant amendment.

On July 13, 2010, HUD approved \$230,894 from FY 2004 left-over funds to supplement four power line projects for 11 households to receive electricity in the communities of Teec Nos Pos, Dennehotso, Inscription House and Shonto.

Chavez John, program manager for Navajo Nation Community Housing and Infrastructure Development, said the nation does not like sending money back to HUD.

“We spend all the money,” John said. “Now, people have electricity and water. We want to see them maintain it.”

John congratulated all for the successful implementation of the projects, including NTUA, JMEC, IHS and Navajo chapters. He was especially proud of the CDBG staff.

CDBG originally began as the Navajo Nation Office of Program Development in 1976. The ICDBG program and set aside was established in 1978.

Maximum ceiling grants were imposed in 1981 at \$5 million. Current ceiling limit was increased for the Navajo Nation to \$5.5 million in 2003.

The objective of CDBG is to develop viable communities by creating decent housing, suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate-income families.

CDBG is currently accepting applications for the FY 2011 grant cycle and the deadline is June 15, 2011.

Information: www.nndcd.org

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Two bookshelves are packed with 19 years of CDBG reports for Navajo Nation ICDBG funds. The reports stretch back to 1992. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



The workspace of James Adakai, a 19-year Navajo Nation veteran, is simple and straight forward. (Photo by Rick Abasta)